

INL News Release
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INL a step closer to serving new isotope customers at Advanced Test Reactor

IDAHO FALLS — The U.S. Department of Energy's Isotope Program in Washington, D.C., is providing \$100,000 to Idaho National Laboratory to support isotope activities. INL will identify basic service costs for isotope customers wanting to use the new Shuttle Irradiation System being installed in INL's Advanced Test Reactor, the world's premier research reactor.

"This is one more step in getting us ready to deliver enhanced isotope production capabilities through INL's Advanced Test Reactor," said INL's Nuclear Medicine Project Manager John Snyder. "This money will be used in part to estimate costs to review and modify, if necessary, existing safety controls and work processes specifically as they relate to use of the shuttle."

Installation of the shuttle in the Advanced Test Reactor is two years ahead of schedule and responds to the needs of universities and nuclear medical companies for specific medical and industrial isotopes. The shuttle will allow for quicker insertion and removal of materials used to produce isotopes.

"The restoration of shuttle capabilities in the ATR makes it possible to affordably produce commercial quantities of short-lived medical isotopes without interfering with other tests and experiments being conducted in the reactor," said Frances Marshall, INL manager of Irradiation Testing.

"This highly versatile capability, which was part of the original reactor design, allows us to support additional University researchers, small businesses and most importantly the ever increasing demand for medical isotopes used to detect and treat serious medical conditions afflicting residents of our region and the nation at large. This is particularly gratifying work for our facility, it uses energy that would otherwise go unused and it does not impact normal reactor operations. This is really an all around great investment."

The Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Isotope Business Office will coordinate sales orders and customer inquiries as directed by the Isotope Program.

On Dec. 29, 2006, the state of Idaho agreed to loan Battelle Energy Alliance, the contractor that operates the INL, \$2 million to allow Battelle Energy Alliance to install a shuttle system in the Advanced Test Reactor.

As part of its contract, Battelle Energy Alliance committed to installing the shuttle by 2010. Projected cost for design and installation in 2004 was \$6 million. Battelle Energy Alliance accepted Idaho's challenge to advance the installation date and current projections call for installation by Sept. 30 of this year.

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